

NOW

LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2004

VOLUME 59 ISSUE 2

A Legacy of *Worship*



A Message From The President



DR. ALVIN O. AUSTIN
President

These are exciting times at LeTourneau University. As students, faculty and staff at our main campus continue to increase in number, the need for a central meeting place has become acute. But it's a great problem to have.

Today we are poised at a milestone in our history as we embark on the largest single-structure capital campaign in our 58-year history: a \$15-million campaign to build the 2,000-seat S.E. Belcher, Jr. Chapel and Performance Center.

A signature structure near the front entrance, it will be a testament to the outside world of the importance of our Christian faith to anyone who drives by the Longview campus. Besides providing the much-needed space for chapel services three times a week for our students, faculty and staff, the new chapel and performance center also will serve as a venue for outreach into the community that is unprecedented since the university's founding. Never before has the university had a venue as welcoming or as accommodating for guests to come on campus for quality events ranging from symphony orchestra presentations to concerts by Christian artists, and from inspiring dramatic presentations to academic symposiums and debates.

It will be a place where all can gather—alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and the broader community—for educational, cultural and spiritual enrichment. While LeTourneau University is not known as a “fine arts school,” our vision does recognize the value and importance of educating—academically, spiritually, emotionally, culturally and physically—the whole person.

When we needed facilities in the past, God faithfully provided. Our largest capital campaign until this point was our 50th anniversary Shaping Tomorrow campaign launched in 1996 that provided funding for the Solheim Recreation and Activity Center and the Glaske Center for Engineering, Science and Technology, as well as general program support, infrastructure improvements and additional endowment funds.

At LeTourneau, faith and ingenuity have always been an integral part of who we are. The new chapel and performance center reflects both. The center's every detail and overall architectural presence will stand as a testament to our founders' commitment to quality faith- and values-centered education.

The S.E. Belcher, Jr. Chapel and Performance Center is a monumental outward expression of an unwavering inner commitment. That commitment is shared by a long line of alumni, students, faculty, staff, board members, donors, corporations, foundations and the East Texas community at large—all benefiting from our cooperative dedication to extending the reach and enhancing the impact of LeTourneau University.

The need is great. The time is now. The impact is eternal. ■

NOW

LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY

CONTENTS

ALVIN O. AUSTIN, Ph.D.
PUBLISHER

JANET RAGLAND
EDITOR IN CHIEF

AMY HALBERT
WRITER / EDITOR

TOM BARNARD
GRAPHIC DESIGN / PHOTOGRAPHY

KENDALL HARPER
CLASS NOTES

LYNN ADLER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

THE IMAGING BUREAU
PRINTING

CONTACT INFORMATION:
PHONE: 903-233-3000
WEB: www.letu.edu

ADMISSIONS:
PHONE: 903-233-3400
TOLL FREE: 800-759-8811

ADULT AND GRADUATE
DEGREE PROGRAMS:
PHONE: 903-233-3250
TOLL FREE: 800-388-5327

ADVANCEMENT DEPARTMENT:
PHONE: 903-233-3810
TOLL FREE: 800-259-LETU

ALUMNI OFFICE:
PHONE: 903-233-3803
E-MAIL: alumni@letu.edu

Contribute your story ideas
and letters to the editor to
NOW@letu.edu.

"NOW" (USPS #307-200) is published four
times per year by LeTourneau University,
2100 South Mobberly, Longview, Texas 75607
• Sent free upon request to Editor, P.O. Box
8001, Longview, Texas 75607. • Periodical
postage paid at Longview, Texas. • Postmas-
ter: Send address changes to: NOW, P.O.
Box 8001, Longview, Texas 75607

4 News and Notes

8 A Legacy of Worship

10 A New Gathering Place

16 Footprints

18 From The Alumni Office

20 Class Notes

22 Shaped By Love

**"BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME;
BEHOLD NOW IS THE DAY OF OUR SALVATION."
II Cor. 6:2**

LeTourneau University is a fully accredited, interdenominational Christian university located in Longview, Texas, offering academic majors in the aeronautical sciences, education, engineering, the humanities and sciences. LeTourneau University also offers business degrees and teacher certification programs at five educational centers in Austin, Bedford, Dallas, Houston and Tyler.

News and Notes

Around Campus

PACT PROGRAM WINS AWARD

LeTourneau's Postbaccalaureate Accelerated Certification for Teachers (PACT) Program has won the Distinguished Program Award from the Association of Continuing Higher Education (ACHE) Region VII, which includes 11 southern states. ACHE was founded in 1939 and covers universities, colleges and individuals who are committed to continuing education.

ROCKWELL COLLINS DONATES EQUIPMENT

Rockwell Collins recently donated the flight deck instrument panel used in lab testing the avionics suite for the Beech Starship to LeTourneau University's aeronautical science department. Rockwell Collins employees and LeTourneau alumni **Lawrence Robinson**, **Bernie Hayes** and **Scott Lowen** were instrumental in securing the donation. The equipment will be used in the avionics laboratory and for flight training.

WELDING RENAMED

LeTourneau University's welding degree concentrations in engineering and engineering technology have been renamed materials joining. The name change better signifies a deliberate move toward preparing graduates for innovative joining technologies of polymers, ceramics and composites, according to **Dr. Yoni Adonyi**, department chair. These concentrations have been successfully reaccredited by ABET/TAC for the maximum period allowed.



SIX INDUCTED INTO LETU'S ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

The 1996-97 and 1997-98 women's basketball national champion teams were inducted into LeTourneau University's Athletic Hall of Fame. Inductees included (back row, from left): **Vicki Sheafer**, **Wendi Gibbs**, **Katie Morman**, **Erin Lioret**, **Holly Griffin**, **Teresa Clark**, **Allison Gardner** and **Tracey Stellato**. Second row: **Shannon Bowie**, **Lexie Coulter**, **Kim Chatman** and **LaDarla Sanders**. In front is Head Coach **Mary Ann Otwell**. Not pictured: **Libby Smith** and **Julie Lawrence**.

Faculty

English professor **Dr. Harvey Solganick** recently presented the paper "The Ten Laws of the Truthful Learner" at the Southwest Regional Conference of the Evangelical Theological Society. Dr. Solganick's paper will be published in *TRENDS: Theological Research Exchange Network Data Systems*.

Dr. Paul Kubricht, history and political science department chair, was elected treasurer of the Christian Pre-law Society during a recent conference at Regent University in Virginia.

Biblical studies professor **Dr. Renate**

Hood presented a paper titled "Ethnic and Religious Profiling: Compelling the Gentiles at Antioch" at the southwestern regional meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Irving, Texas.

Dr. Steven Ball, chair of the Department of Chemistry and Physics, presented a paper titled "Teaching Plate Tectonics in Physical Science" at the Texas APS/AAPT conference at Tarleton State University. This fall, Ball will be the first LeTourneau professor to teach at Handong Global University in Korea. He will teach physics I, physics II and creation and evolution courses in English. His family will accompany him to Korea.



LETU PROFESSOR AWARDED \$160,000 IN GRANTS FOR TEACHING

Dr. Evelyn Brown, a professor in the Post Baccalaureate Certification for Teachers program at the Houston Education Center, has been awarded \$160,000 in teaching quality grants to help improve how mathematics is taught in schools. The funding is through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

She will provide two summer symposiums and yearlong mentoring, assessments and evaluations to math teachers in the middle school and high school levels, in partnership with North Forest Independent School District in Houston as part of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Brown said that due to a shortage of qualified mathematics teachers, some classrooms are staffed with teachers whose primary area of expertise is not mathematics. These new teacher quality grants provide summer symposiums and yearlong mentoring to improve teachers' content knowledge and also provide new teaching methods that make teaching mathematics more interesting and practical.

Dr. Martin Batts, chair of the English department, is one of 15 hand-picked scholars chosen nationwide to receive a scholarship to participate in a five-week National Endowment for the Humanities seminar at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., this summer. The topic is "John Calvin and the Transformation of Religious Culture in Geneva, France and Beyond." Batts also was elected historian of the C.S. Lewis and the Inklings Society, which was newly formed during the recent C.S. Lewis and the Inklings conference hosted at LeTourneau University in April.

Mathematics and computer science professor **Dr. Steve Armstrong** was installed by the faculty of his alma mater, Crown College, as an honorary member of the Delta Epsilon Chi Honor Society, which is open to graduates of member colleges of the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges. Up to seven percent of a graduating class may be elected and only alumni who have been graduated at least 10 years may be named to honorary memberships. The award is given to alumni who have shown significant intellectual achievement, proven Christian character and leadership ability.

English professor **Dr. Annie Olson** has been nominated for the Hugh Burns award for the best dissertation of the year in the field of computers and writing. She also was a co-facilitator for a workshop on using blogs in the composition classroom at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in San Antonio, Texas.

Chemistry professor **Dr. Gary DeBoer** will spend the summer at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston on a renewed fellowship to continue the work he began last summer in nanotechnology.

Dr. Dick Johnson, chemistry and physics professor, served as chair of one of the sessions at the National Association of Corrosion Engineers conference.

Dr. Scott Hummel, biblical studies department chair, published the article "Athens in Paul's Time" in *Biblical Illustrator*. He also will attend the CCCU Faculty Study Tour at the Middle East Studies Program in Cairo, Egypt, this summer.

Marketing professor **Ken Fairweather** was selected as one of 19 marketing professors nationwide to participate in a symposium sponsored by McGraw-Hill Publishers to provide input on textbooks and supplementary materials.

Psychology professor **Dr. Rod Hetzel** was invited to present at a workshop to the faculty and students in the departments of psychology and educational psychology at Texas A&M University titled "Assessment and Treatment of Compulsive Sexual Behavior in Men." Hetzel shared a theoretical model of compulsive sexual behavior that he developed in addition to presenting counseling treatment approaches to help men achieve victory over sexual compulsivity.

Shari Mills, education professor, was elected the regional representative for the Texas Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (TAECE).

Dr. Duane Trogdon

is the new director of athletics at LeTourneau University. Trogdon has 30 years of experience in collegiate athletics coaching baseball, basketball, football and golf. In his five years as athletic director at Huntingdon College in Alabama, he directed and supervised 11 collegiate sports programs while leading the men's golf team to five straight national championship tournaments. He also designed, created and implemented an NCAA Division III model football program for Huntingdon beginning in 2002. Trogdon also will teach kinesiology classes.



LeTourneau's new men's head soccer coach, **Tom Wait**, comes to LETU from Pine Tree High School in Longview, Texas, where his team finished first in their district.

Wait has 12 years of high school coaching experience, is a six-time district coach of the year and has been elected twice as

the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches (TASCO) regional director.



Former Wheaton College men's assistant soccer coach **Troy Edwards** is the new head women's soccer coach at LeTourneau University. Edwards was part of the coaching staff that

led Wheaton to the 1997 NCAA Division III national championship and a national runner's up finish in 1999. During his time as assistant coach, Wheaton set an NCAA national record of 66 consecutive regular season games without a loss.

Dr. Joonwan Kim, electrical engineering professor, co-presented a paper titled "Performance Analysis of the Adjusted Step Size NLMS Algorithm" at the 36th IEEE Symposium on Systems Theory.

Staff

LETU President **Dr. Alvin O. Austin** was invited to co-host an orientation for new college presidents at the 28th Annual President's Conference in Washington, D.C. by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. He also served as moderator for a session on current accreditation issues with Roberts Wesleyan College President John Martin (not formerly of LETU.)

Linda Fitzhugh, vice president for enrollment services, was a co-presenter at a session titled "Millennials Rising" at the annual CCCU conference for chief enrollment officers.

Terry A. Zeitlow, former director of operations and development for New Life Church and Academy in Woodbury, Minn., is the new assistant vice president of university advancement at

LeTourneau University. A 1987 LeTourneau graduate, Zeitlow earned his master's degree in education from the University of Texas at Tyler in 1989 while serving as



News and Notes

a resident director and men's basketball coach at LeTourneau University. He spent seven years as a director of development at Youth for Christ in Fort Wayne, Ind., before accepting the position at New Life Church and Academy.

MARKETING SERVICES WINS AWARDS

Tom Barnard, creative director, and **Amy Halbert**, writer/editor, won the top prize, a grand gold award, at the district Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) awards for their "Create Something Amazing" departmental brochures showcasing the degree programs offered at LeTourneau University. Barnard and former writer **Rebecca Hopkins** also won a grand gold award in the category of planned giving/low cost program for their "Gift Annuity Postcard." CASE is the largest international association of educational institutions serving more than 3,200 universities, colleges, schools and related organizations. Barnard and Halbert also won a Bronze Addy Award from the East Texas Advertising Federation for the departmental brochures, which also won an Award of Excellence from the Communicator Awards. The *NOW* magazine's "World Impact" issue won the Award of Distinction from the Communicator Awards.

Special Events

INVENTION CONTEST NAMES WINNERS

Rex Ray of Bonham, Texas, was the grand prize winner at LeTourneau's annual Invention Design Contest for his bicycle gear conveyor drive system. Other first-place winners were **Jacey Fleet** of Pine Tree Elementary School for her "Baseball Super Shagger"; **Katie Jett** of Pine Tree Intermediate School for "Stayin' Alive Plant Waterer"; **Cole Fulton** of Weldon Intermediate School in Gladewater for his "You've Got Mail" red flashing-light mailbox; and **Scott Barnhill** of St. Paul's School of Baltimore for his "Security One Card" invention.

LETOURNEAU HONORED

R.G. LeTourneau has been selected to the American Road and Transportation Builders Association's (ARTBA) list of the "Top 100 Private Sector Transportation Construction Professionals of the 20th Century." The group's centennial celebration program will draw attention to the enormous contributions made by the men and women of the transportation construction industry during the 20th century.



A FOND FAREWELL

LeTourneau University President Dr. Alvin O. Austin, standing, presented an appreciation plaque to Edith Hardwick at her going away party in the lobby of Heath-Hardwick Hall. Hardwick is the widow of former LeTourneau University president Dr. Harry Hardwick. Hardwick, 84, is moving to Minnesota to be closer to her children. Pictured with Austin and Hardwick are Dr. Paul Bauman, vice president emeritus, and Dr. Austin's wife, Sammie.

Students

LETU STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Sarah Plymale, an electrical engineering



GRADUATION

LeTourneau University held its largest commencement exercises in the university's history with over 400 graduates receiving their diplomas May 8. Jim Akovenko, president and executive director of JAARS, a missionary aviation organization that supports Bible translation efforts worldwide, gave the commencement address. In separate graduation exercises in Houston, 258 students from the Houston and Austin educational centers received their diplomas May 15 at Sugar Creek Baptist Church, near southwest Houston.

major, will become the first LeTourneau student to be accepted into the Johns Hopkins graduate program for engineering in Baltimore. **Betsy Hunt**, an engineering major with a biomedical concentration, heads off to Northwestern University in Chicago after receiving a National Science Foundation Research Fellowship that will pay her \$153,000 for three years. Other students accepted to graduate schools include biology major **Matthew Brown** who was accepted into medical school at Texas A&M University. **Sara Wuenschel** will attend Texas A&M to pursue her doctorate in chemistry. **Thomas Grimes** is pursuing his doctorate in chemistry at the University of North Texas. December graduate **Stephen Casey** was admitted to Regent Law School on scholarship. **Sabrina (Antle) Shandley** will begin her doctorate in microbiology and immunology at University of Texas San Antonio Health Science Center.



GAPS STUDENT EARNS SCHOLARSHIP

GAPS Enrollment Manager **Kathy Perkins** and Houston Educational Center Director **Dawn Rodak** congratulate Houston GAPS student **Terri Bachand** for winning a \$1,000 Columbia Energy Scholarship to help pay for her tuition costs. Bachand is a senior administrative assistant at Florida Gas Transmission, an Enron/Sonata affiliate in Houston and is part of the cohort BA/587. She was honored at a luncheon in Houston.

AERO SCIENCE TEAM WINS SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

LeTourneau University aeronautical science students won the 2004 Red Baron Sportsmanship Award and placed 10th in their second year at the National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) 2004 SAFECON flight competition national finals. The team also was runner up for the Loening Trophy, which is the most prestigious award in collegiate aviation. **Justin White** finished 5th in the simulator



MARKETING STUDENTS EARN FIRST PRIZE AT CONFERENCE

In their first year to compete, the LeTourneau University Marketing Club won 1st place at the annual International American Marketing Association's (AMA) Chapter Exhibit competition in New Orleans. They competed against 45 other major universities from across the country, including University of Texas, Penn State and Kent State. The students, pictured in front of their award-winning entry, are kneeling from left: **Rachel Tidwell**, **Katie Mitchell**, **Dave Huber**, **Gregory Niven**, **Titus Hope**, **Michelle Miller**, **Jenny Mitchell**, **Vivian Underwood**. Standing from left: adviser **Dr. Ken Fairweather**, President **Dan Florczykowski** and **Dawn Graham**.

event, **Jon Weber** was 7th in aircraft recognition competition and rookie **Sam Lloyd** took 10th place in the computer accuracy competition. They were among 400 competitors and 31 teams, including the largest flight schools in the nation.

MINI BAJA TEAM COMPETES

After a long trek to Oregon, the LETU mini baja team placed 20th and 39th with their two vehicles they took to Society of Automotive Engineering (SAE) competition, out of 85 entries competing. Both vehicles were performing well until each car had a significant failure in the four-hour endurance race event, which was the highest point value event in the competition. Team members were **Ross Schultz**, **Chris Bargaen**, **Ben Barlow**, **Corrie Beck**, **Jonathan Edwards**, **Michael Hendricks**, **Ben Juergens**, **Will Nelle**, **Dana Shave**, **Ryan Tanner**, **Timothy Williams** and **Tony Woesch**.

HUMAN-POWERED VEHICLE TEAM COMPETES

The LETU human-powered vehicle teams,

which also competed in American Society of Mechanical Engineering (ASME) in Oregon, took first place overall in the utility competition and second place in the multi-rider competition. There were about 30 schools at the competition. LETU students also took first place in the multi-rider sprint, multi-rider endurance and utility design events. Student team members were **Caleb Fulks**, **Justin Bajema**, **Marcus Epp**, **Eric Faulkner**, **Pete McGrath**, **Roddy Simpson**, **Juan Solis**, **Karl Van Vossen**, **Sara Vestvals** and **Veronica Spain**.

COMPUTER TEAM EARNS HONORABLE MENTION IN PRAGUE

The LeTourneau University programming team received an honorable mention at ACM's International Collegiate Programming Competition in Prague, Czech Republic. Team members who competed in the five-hour long contest were, from left, **John Spiegel** of Maite, Guam; **Daniel Engel** of Salem Ore.; and **Jesse Dean McDonald** of Milford, Ind. Computer science professor **Dr. Brent Baas** accompanied the team.

A Legacy of Worship

Written by Amy Halbert

***"Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness;
Come before him with joyful songs.
Know that the Lord is God."
—Psalm 100:1-2***

The simple, white-shingled chapel sits stoically on the east side of campus among much younger buildings of brick and mortar. If its walls could speak, they could tell of the many heads humbly bowed in prayer, the many joyful songs that reached its rafters, the many souls saved and heartbroken cries God heard from its wooden pews during its 60-year history.

Recognized in 1997 as a Texas historic landmark by the Texas Historical Commission, Speer Chapel remains the only remaining original structure from the days when the university was the site of the Harmon General Hospital, a U.S. Army facility. The inscription on the marker succinctly sums up the chapel's heritage:

"Authorized by the U.S. Army in 1942 and named for Col. Daniel Warrick Harmon, Harmon General Hospital was in operation from November 1942 to December 1945. This ecumenical chapel opened in January 1943. Protestant, Catholic and Jewish clergy served here. The hospital property was acquired by the LeTourneau Foundation in 1946 for use as a college. Despite several years as a storage facility, the chapel retained enough of its original fabric for renovation in the late 1950s and again in 1983 when it was formally named Speer Chapel. The structure remains a well-preserved vernacular chapel. Its notable features include a front-facing gabled roof, center projecting entrance with the roof below a central steeple, and wood sash windows."

Today, the building is clean and well-preserved, but history was not always kind. Used as a warehouse in the 1950s for crates of surplus engines, the chapel had fallen into

disrepair, with a large crane perched inside and the staging area removed. Crates had damaged the walls, some of which had been removed completely.

But despite its disrepair, the WWII-era chapel made a grand impression on LeTourneau Technical Institute student Don Landis who gained permission in 1958 from then-dean Dr. Allen C. Tyler to begin repairing the chapel for use as a place of worship. Landis and a group of students donated their own time and energy and completed the renovations by the following fall.

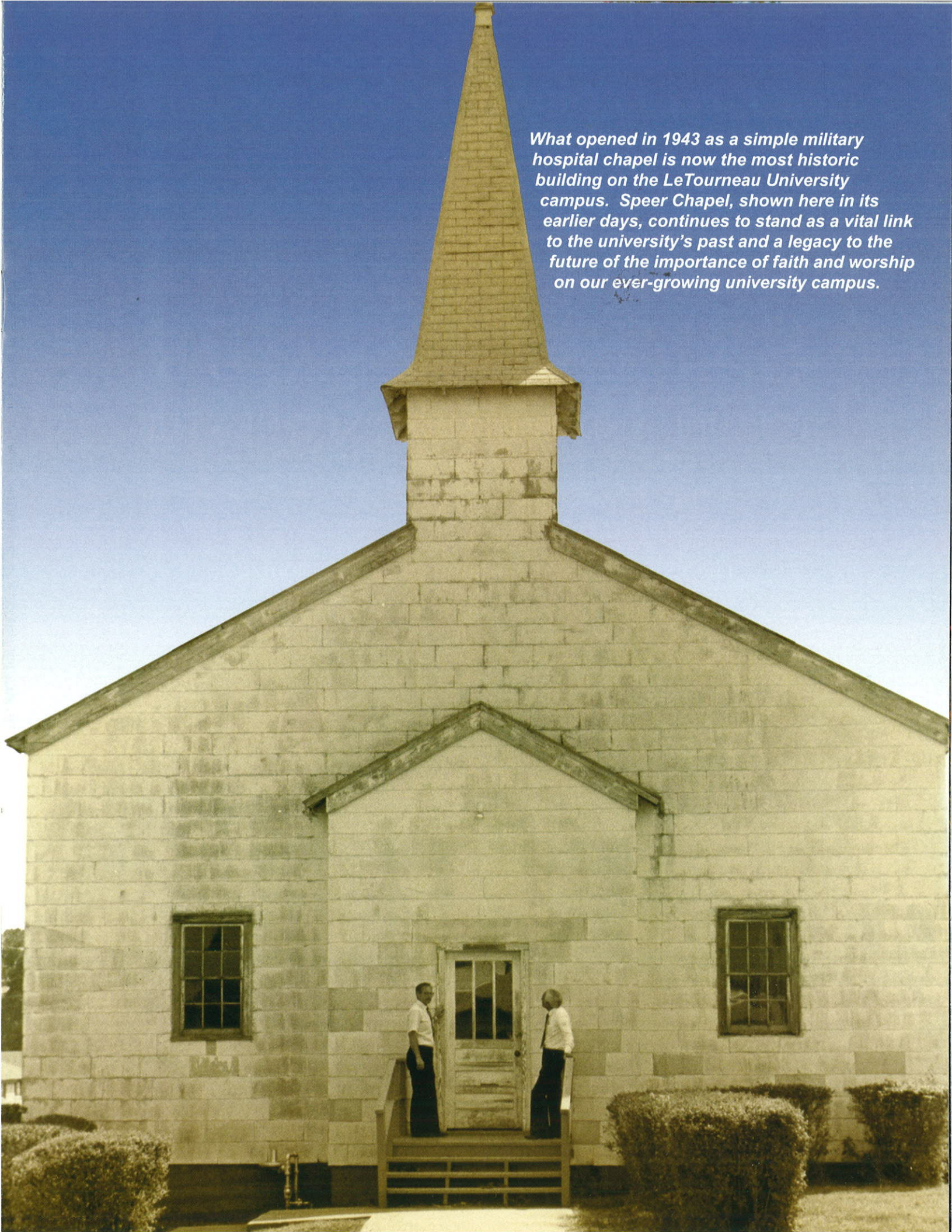
Through the early to mid-1960s, the chapel shined again as a place for students and the community to come together to hear God's Word. By 1965 the 250-seat chapel could no longer accommodate the growing LeTourneau community, so a larger metal building was built on campus for worship services. When that building, too, became overcrowded, the university built the current assembly building in 1976, where chapel worship services have been held ever since.

By 1982, the chapel once again needed a makeover. Members of the LeTourneau College community rose to the challenge to help preserve the historic chapel. LeTourneau administration agreed to spend approximately \$40,000 to remodel the structure, but midway through the process, they determined the chapel deserved a more extensive restoration which would require an additional \$30,000. Former missionary and retired professor Dr. Dorothy Speer of Lancaster, Penn., donated the additional funds and provided an endowment for the chapel's maintenance.

In 1983, the LeTourneau College Board of Trustees named the building Speer Memorial Chapel in honor of her generous gift. To add the finishing touch to the renovated interior, LeTourneau friend and former *NOW* magazine editor Nels Stjernstrom and his wife, Bernice, donated a Hammond console organ.

Today Speer Chapel remains true to the building's humble beginnings as a popular place for prayer meetings, small group worship and weddings while it serves as a reminder of how much the school has grown.

What opened in 1943 as a simple military hospital chapel is now the most historic building on the LeTourneau University campus. Speer Chapel, shown here in its earlier days, continues to stand as a vital link to the university's past and a legacy to the future of the importance of faith and worship on our ever-growing university campus.



A New Place to Gather

S.E. BELCHER, JR.

CHAPEL AND PERFORMANCE CENTER

“The feel of the new building will revolutionize
how students view worship on campus.”

—Dr. Harold Carl, university chaplain



Within the walls of a hangar-like metal building on the southeast side of campus lurks a serious problem.

Constructed in 1976 as a "temporary" solution to overcrowding for chapel services, LeTourneau University's assembly building is now becoming hopelessly congested.

Built when the university's student enrollment was only about 600, the building currently seats over 1,100 students three times a week. Students shuffle in along the polished, bare cement floor to find their seats amid stackable chairs arranged in rows that fill the wide, rectangular room. Late arrivals sit on the floor.

But now, after six consecutive years of record enrollments, the university is poised to embark on the largest single-structure capital campaign in its 58-year history. The focus of the campaign is to fund a 2,000-seat chapel and performance center.

Named the S.E. Belcher, Jr. Chapel and Performance Center, the \$15-million building will honor the Board of Trustees member whose deep and long-standing commitment to the school's mission led him to pledge \$5 million, the largest single gift in the university's history.

The signature structure will be located near the front entrance of the 162-acre campus at the highest geographical point in south Longview. It will be a place where the university as a whole can come together for worship, educational lectures and performance events that honor God. It also will provide the university an outreach into the community.

"The feel of the new building will revolutionize how students view worship on campus," said Dr. Harold Carl, university chaplain. "Whenever we gather together for chapel as a community, we are assembling as the body of Christ. So while we may not think the building is sacred, our time together in prayer and worship, to hear God's Word, is a sacred time.

"While a building by itself isn't everything, it makes a big difference in terms of how people approach worship.

Surroundings matter," Carl said. "People want to go to a place that is physically comfortable and inviting. And music inspires the spirit.

"Because of limitations due to our building size, we have a lot of great speakers and programs in chapel that we can't open to the public, or even to local churches, that would benefit from hearing from these folks. "I wrestle every day with no space to add even just 100 people. It hampers our outreach.

"One thing I'm looking forward to is hosting a pastor's conference where we can bring in somebody like Tony Evans, who does preaching and pastoral theology, and serve the community that way," the chaplain said. "And students are looking forward to hosting Christian music concerts. With a 2,000-seat venue, we can bring in more name acts like Jars of Clay, Audio Adrenaline, Paul Baloche and Phil Keaggy, who wouldn't consider performing in a venue like the assembly building."

The new chapel and performance center will promote the arts and music, host plays, dramas and lectures and perhaps the Longview Symphony Orchestra. While the university does not offer majors in the performing arts, administrators believe students deserve to be exposed to quality entertainment and cultural offerings. The university welcomes the opportunity to become a regional center for quality Christian and "family friendly" entertainment.

The chapel and performance center would be the home to student talent shows like the annual Hootenanny, and to concerts by the LeTourneau Singers or the university's jazz band and Stage Right drama club. Potential community events include university colloquiums or debates on scientific, cultural and political issues.

"We all look forward to the new chapel building," Jennie Parks, a junior elementary education major, said. "We see this school as a blessing from God that we have the opportunity to worship together as a student body. It helps us develop as individuals and as the body of Christ."

Calvin Ross, an aeronautical science major, said the new chapel will be a good

*Written by Janet Ragland
and Lynn Adler*

Illustration by Tom Barnard

addition. "I think that the assembly building is definitely too small for the current needs of the student body, as well as the ongoing needs that will be faced with the implementation of the new residence hall."

In his 18th year as president of LeTourneau University, Dr. Alvin O. Austin views the completion of the new chapel and performance center as a key to the very mission of the university.

"Our vision is to educate the whole person—academically, spiritually, emotionally, culturally and physically," he said. "While we have great labs, fine classrooms and a wonderful recreation and activity center, the lack of an adequate chapel and performance center greatly limits our ability to come together as a university family. While we are not a fine arts school, we still want to provide the cultural and social enrichment that help to define a well-rounded education."

The fund-raising campaign is well underway, with Belcher's generous pledge inspiring many others, including each of LeTourneau's board members, who have unanimously pledged their financial support with more than \$1 million in additional commitments. University faculty and staff have expressed their commitment with 90 percent participation and more than \$190,000 in cash and pledges, making this the largest percentage of faculty and staff support ever for a LeTourneau University capital campaign.

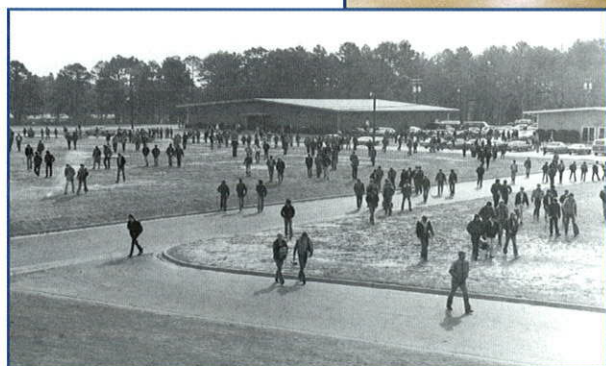
In January 2004, The J.E. and L.E. Mabree Foundation advanced the campaign's momentum with a \$1 million challenge gift, conditioned upon the completion of the \$15 million campaign by Dec. 31, 2004. That support, combined with additional significant gifts, brings the total commitments to nearly \$8.7 million, meaning the university must raise \$6.3 million in gifts and pledges

in a little more than six months.

"Raising these funds will be the greatest fund-raising challenge we've ever had in our 58-year history," Austin said. "It will require faithful support from all of our university family and outside support, as well. Payments can be spread over a three- or four-year period, but we need everyone's generous response at whatever level they can give to this project if it is to become a reality."

Following a successful fund-raising campaign, construction of the chapel and performance center is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2005, with completion planned for fall of 2006.

It's only a matter of time—and commitment on the part of many—until footsteps, voices, laughter and singing resonate throughout the thoughtfully designed spaces of this cherished gathering place—where lessons are learned, choices are made and leaders are born. ■



As the university continues to grow, students often find that chapels are overcrowded and are standing room only (top photo). Built in 1976, the Assembly Building (shown in bottom photo) has served its purpose well, but is too small for future growth. The new S.E. Belcher, Jr. Chapel and Performance Center will solve this problem.

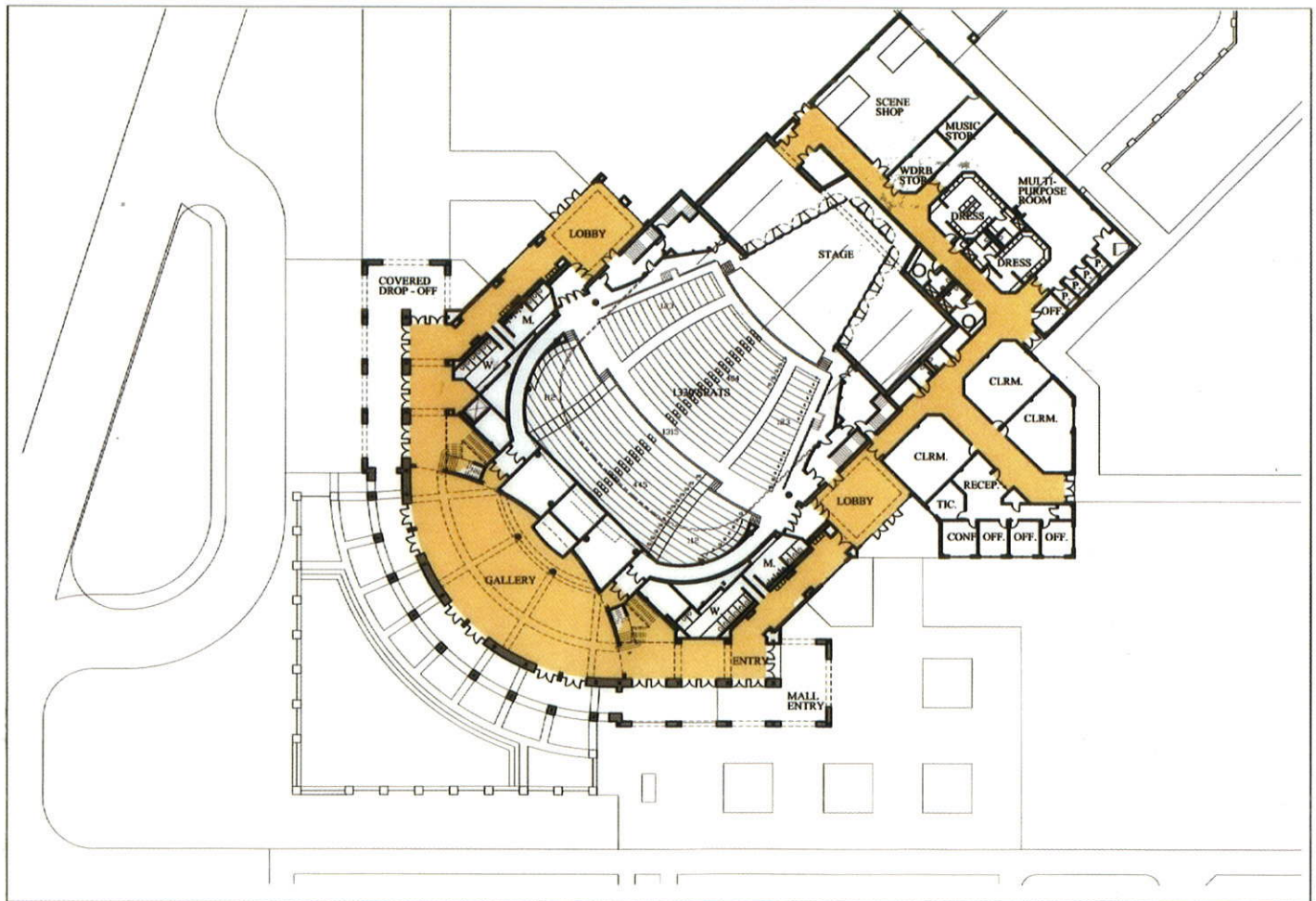


\$8.7 million in cash and pledges has been raised toward the \$15 million goal to build the S.E. Belcher, Jr. Chapel and Performance Center.

For more information on how you can support LeTourneau University through this exciting project, contact the Advancement Office at 1-800-259-5388.

S.E. BELCHER, JR.

CHAPEL AND PERFORMANCE CENTER



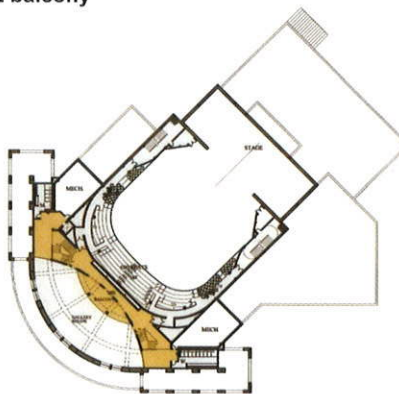
LeTourneau University

GROUND LEVEL
S. E. BELCHER JR. CHAPEL AND PERFORMANCE CENTER

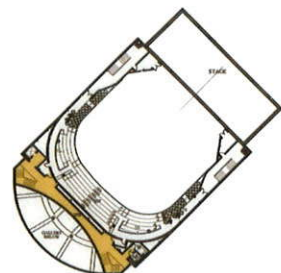
LEWIS, ELLIOTT & STUDER INCORPORATED
1000 NORTH AVE., SUITE 100 • DALLAS, TEXAS 75201 • (214) 255-4500 • FAX (214) 255-4500

Designed by professionals in architecture and theater design, including one of the finest acoustical firms in the nation, the new structure will feature 1,400 seats on the expansive ground level (shown above) and another 600 seats in the two opera house-style balcony galleries (at right). Built for maximum flexibility, the facility will provide prop and staging areas, soundproofed rehearsal rooms, classrooms, a multipurpose room and offices—all in a warm, uplifting and attractive environment.

First balcony

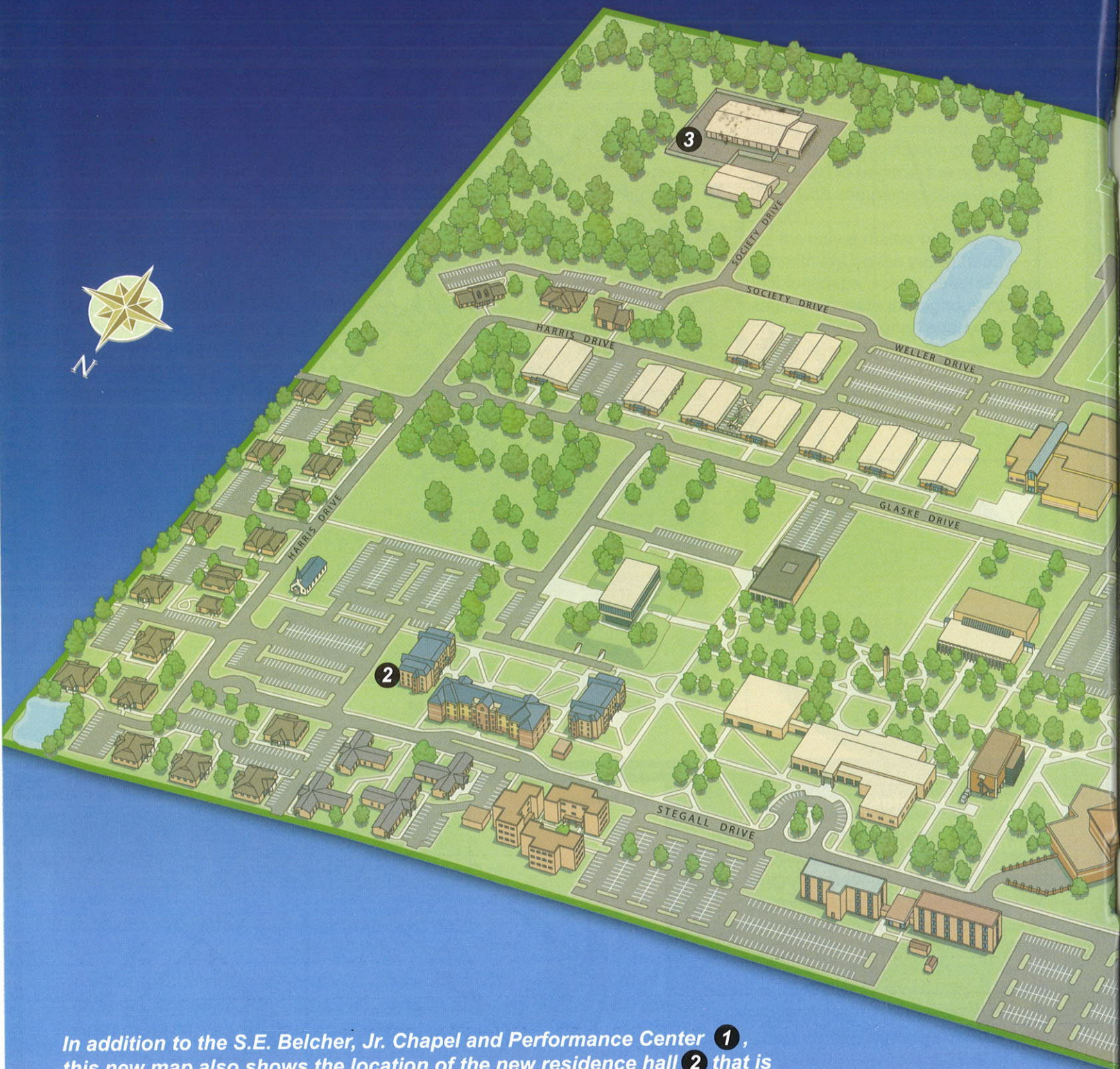


Second balcony



S.E. BELCHER, JR.

CHAPEL AND PERFORMANCE CENTER



*In addition to the S.E. Belcher, Jr. Chapel and Performance Center **1**, this new map also shows the location of the new residence hall **2** that is under construction as well as the recently moved and renovated Facilities Services Building **3**.*

S.E. Belcher, Jr.

By Janet Ragland



Shelby Elliot Belcher, Jr. came to know Christ at the tender age of 15, and his adult life has been guided by the desire to see the Great Commission fulfilled.

Born in 1916 in Bibb County, Ala., Belcher attended high school at the Gulf Coast Military Academy in Gulfport, Miss., and

earned his commerce degree in 1937 from Marion Military Institute in Marion, Ala. The following year he began working at his father's saw and planing mill, which he bought in 1946 and kept running until he sold it in 1960 to pursue other business interests.

A successful businessman in timber, insurance, banking and real estate, friends describe Belcher as a quiet and humble man who has committed his life and resources to helping Christian ministries.

"He's a very caring and humble person who loves serving the Lord and loves helping others on the missions fields," said LeTourneau University President Dr. Alvin O. Austin. "No one has given more of their time and resources than Elliot Belcher. He has been a true friend to the university."

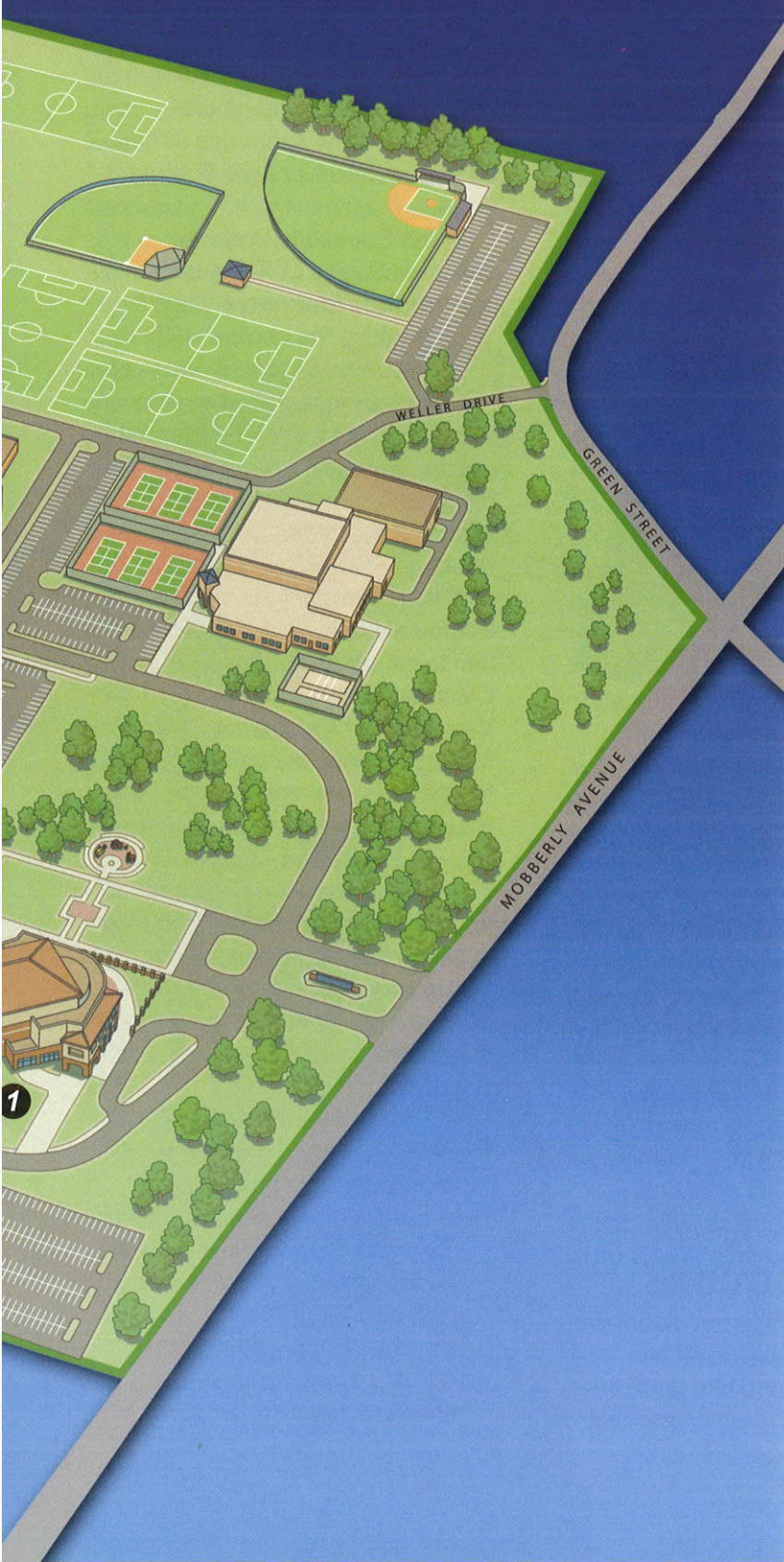
Belcher has served on the boards of many civic and Christian organizations, including Campus Crusade for Christ, Reformed Theological Seminary, Montreat-Anderson College, Southeastern Bible College and Birmingham Seminary. He also has served on a variety of boards for the Palmer Home for Children, the Religious Heritage Foundation of America and the Boy Scouts of America.

He became a member of LeTourneau University's Board of Trustees in 1987 and rarely missed a meeting before retiring as an emeritus board trustee in 2003.

LeTourneau University's 72-foot brick bell tower, which was dedicated in May 1992, is named in memory of his first wife and former high school sweetheart, Jeannette Steele Belcher, who died in 1991.

Today, he and his second wife, Louise, live in Brent, Ala., in the home where his two sons, Shelby III and Alan, grew up.

When Belcher pledged the lead gift for LeTourneau University's new chapel and performance center that will bear his name, his letter stated, "I intend to give \$5 million to the university to provide the initial leadership gift to fund what I believe will be the most significant and important building on the campus. This new chapel performance center will make an eternal impact on the lives of our students." ■



Footprints

Written by Janet Ragland



“Another powerful influence on one’s moral development is identification with people one admires.”

—Thomas Elrich

David Eaton, a junior mechanical engineering major from Waxahachie, Texas, spent 15 days this spring traveling in India with internationally known Christian apologist, author and biblical scholar Dr. Ravi Zacharias through LeTourneau University’s Footprints Project.

The Footprints Project is designed to give LETU students opportunities to observe Christian leaders within the context of their lives and work. Students observe, listen and ask questions as they keep a journal of their mentoring events, feelings, lessons and reflections. They share their experiences with others when they return.

“It was absolutely amazing,” Eaton said of the trip that took him to six cities in India: Chennai, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Delhi, Varanasi and Agra, while Zacharias fulfilled four speaking engagements to Christian ministry leaders, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Born in India to Christian parents, the 58-year-old Zacharias immigrated to Canada at the age of 20. He has spoken at university campuses and before heads of state in more than 50 countries. Zacharias also is a member of LeTourneau University’s Board of Trustees.

“We stayed at the nicest hotels for health reasons, but also visited Mother Teresa’s orphanage and House of Dying in Calcutta,” Eaton said. Mother Teresa, who died in 1997, won the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize for her lifetime of charity work to ease human suffering. Leading the Order of the Missionaries Charity, she opened the House of